

Chesterfield County Department of Utilities
Cross Connection Control and Backflow-Prevention Program

Simply put, a cross connection can occur when there is the slightest possibility of a nonpotable source mixing with a public water system. As a water provider, the Chesterfield County Utilities Department is required by the Virginia Department of Health, Waterworks Regulations, to maintain an ongoing cross connection control and backflow-prevention program. The purpose of the program is to ensure the potable water supply is being protected against any potential sources of contamination. A good cross connection control program requires a partnership between Chesterfield County Utilities, the Building Inspections Department, the Virginia Department of Health, the backflow device tester and you, the customer. The customer plays a very important role in our program because he or she is the owner of the device. We want to educate you about your responsibility to be compliant with the program.

Chesterfield County Utilities developed this program in 1979 in an effort to provide the safest, highest quality water to all of our customers. Because of the expanded use of irrigation systems by residents, we felt it was necessary to educate our customers about the requirements of our program and at the same time provide them with as much information about how they can partner with us in protecting the water system.

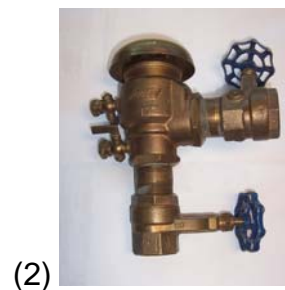
Chesterfield Utilities wants to educate the customer and make them aware of what a cross connection is and how they can participate in this partnership. Every new home in Chesterfield County is constructed using the latest building-code requirements from the [Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code](#). One of the plumbing requirements is that all outside hose bibs are required to have a device installed on them called a vacuum breaker. A vacuum breaker is a check valve that will only allow water to leave the faucet. Some of these devices come equipped with locking screws. The screw head is designed to shear off once it has been tightened and this prevents the device from being removed.



A vacuum breaker can prevent the backflow of a potential source of contamination from not only your house's plumbing system, but the public water system in Chesterfield County, too. During inspection of your home, the building

inspector will make sure all water outlets equipped to have a garden hose hooked to it, have a vacuum breaker installed. It is your responsibility to make sure they stay on. If you do not have one on your hose bib, they are available at your local home-improvement store or plumbing-supply business.

Every irrigation system that is connected to the Chesterfield County water system is required to have a backflow prevention device installed before the first sprinkler head. There are two acceptable devices for this application. They are (1) a reduced pressure zone device and (2) a pressure vacuum breaker.



When you install an irrigation system in Chesterfield County, you need to get an auxiliary plumbing permit from the Building Inspections Department. Their office will come out and inspect the *installation* of your irrigation system and the proper *installation* of the backflow-prevention device. It is your responsibility to get the functionality of the backflow device tested before the system is put in service. This testing is required on new devices, and it must be tested by a state-certified backflow-device tester and a completed [backflow assembly test report](#) filed with Chesterfield Utilities. One of the primary reasons for this effort to educate customers is because the customers may not be aware they are required to have their backflow device tested once a year and a new test report completed and filed with the Utilities Department.

This is not a new policy or ordinance. This has been part of our cross connection control and backflow prevention program since its inception, but we want to educate the customer about what they can do to help with this partnership program.

We will be stepping up our efforts to enforce this regulation with mailings to customers about program requirements and compliance in an effort to work together toward a common goal of having a safe water supply. If you have any questions or want more information, please call the Chesterfield Utilities, Cross Connection Control Information line at 748-1280.